PE 308 Theory and Psychology of Coaching

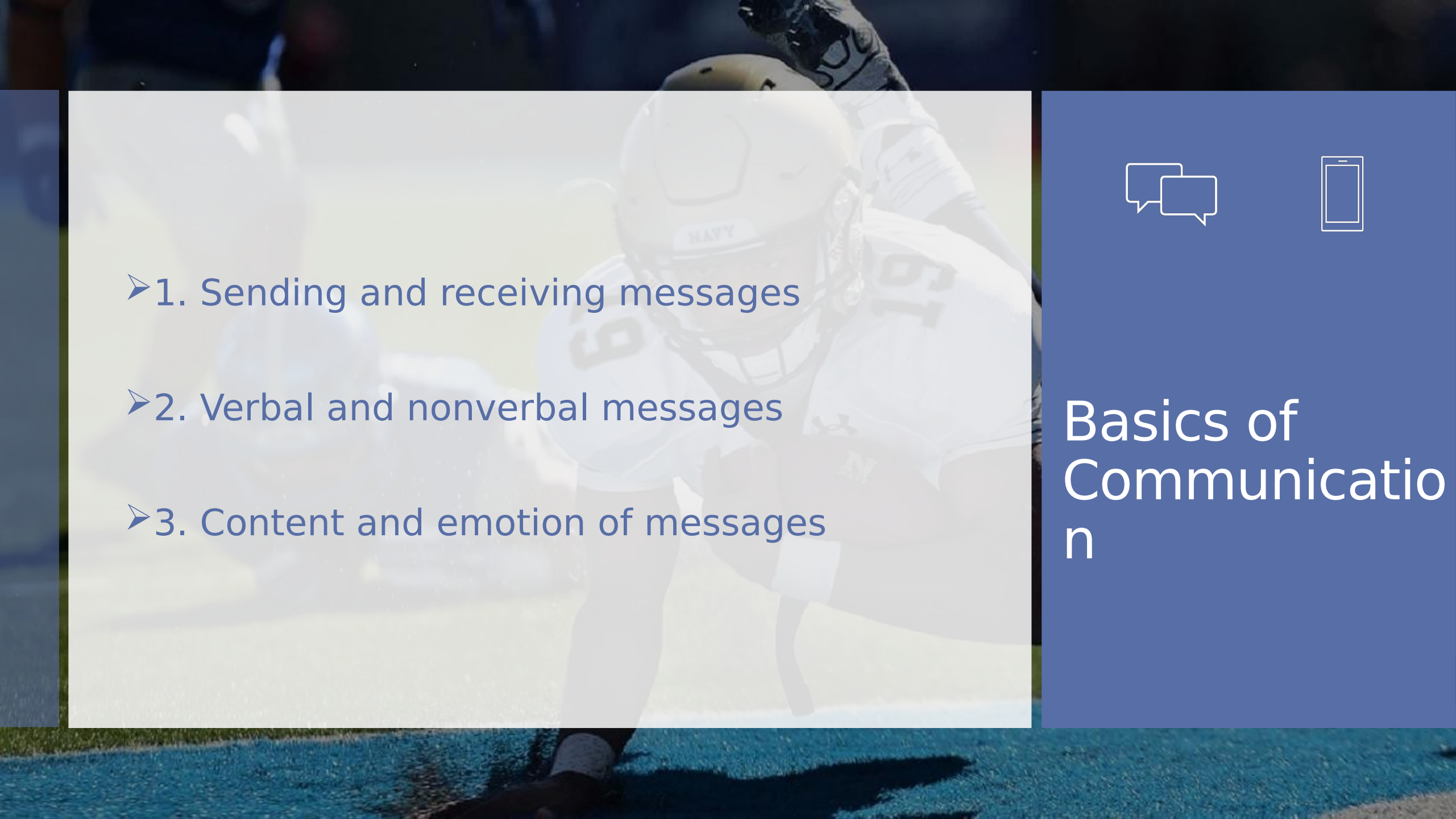
Chapter 6 Communicating With Your Athletes

Key Concepts

- The way a coach communicates with athletes directly affects how the athletes perceive the coach and how they feel about themselves.
- A cooperative style of communication shows respect for athletes and others by being straightforward, positive, and confident – and it encourages others to do the same.
- Eight major communication problems are common to the coaching profession.

Key Concepts

- Over 70 percent of all communication is nonverbal; gestures, body positions, facial expressions, and actions are more important than what is said.
- Using social media effectively is an important aspect of coaching today.
- Coaches can continually improve their communication skills.

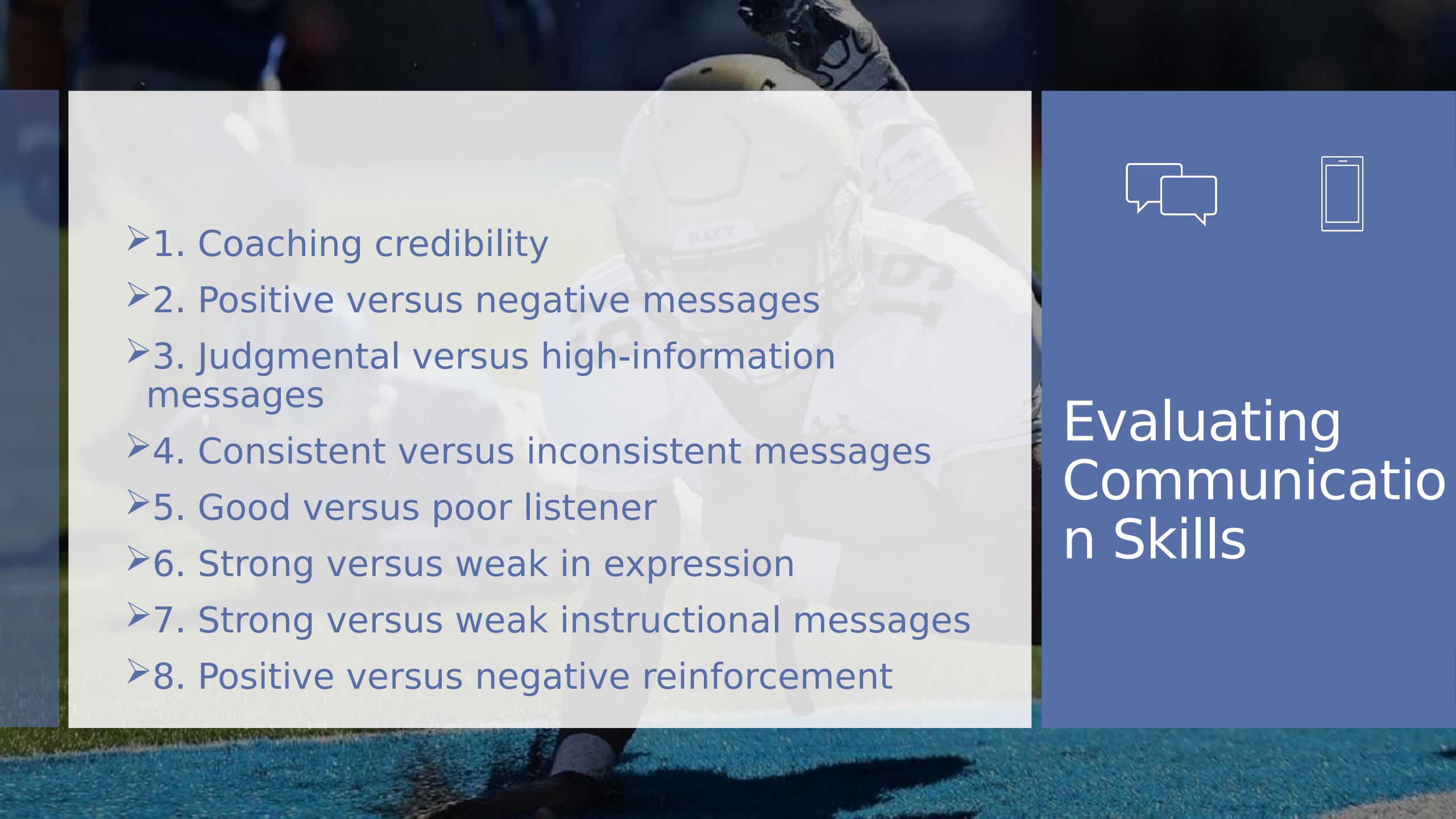


Basics of Communication

- 1. Sending and receiving messages
- 2. Verbal and nonverbal messages
- 3. Content and emotion of messages

Ineffective Communication

- 1. Common reasons for ineffective communication by coaches
- 2. Ineffective communication is not always the coach’s fault



Evaluating Communication Skills

- 1. Coaching credibility
- 2. Positive versus negative messages
- 3. Judgmental versus high-information messages
- 4. Consistent versus inconsistent messages
- 5. Good versus poor listener
- 6. Strong versus weak in expression
- 7. Strong versus weak instructional messages
- 8. Positive versus negative reinforcement

Coaching Styles and Communication

- 1. Command-style communication
- 2. Submissive-style communication
- 3. Cooperative-style communication
  - a. How you communicate can make a difference
  - b. Stories communicate important messages to athletes

Developing Communication Skills

- Credibility of Communicator
  - a. Coaching recommendations for credibility
- Communicating with a Positive Approach
  - a. Breaking the negativity habit
  - b. Wanting to change
  - c. Realistic expectations
  - d. Coaching recommendations for positivity
- Communicating High-Information Messages
  - a. Athletes prefer specific instructions over general encouragement
  - b. Coaching recommendations for being less judgmental

Developing Communication Skills

- Communicating with Consistency
  - a. Value of consistency
  - b. Coaching recommendations for being consistent
- Learning to Listen
  - a. Improving listening skills
  - b. Active versus passive listening
  - c. Coaching recommendations for active listening
- Nonverbal Communication
  - a. Importance of nonverbal communication
  - b. Categories of nonverbal communication
  - c. Coaching recommendations for nonverbal communication

Social Media

- 1. Examples of social media (blogging; podcasting; social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter; videos on YouTube; photos on Flickr; and email)
- 2. Team Websites
- 3. Positive and negative uses of social media
- 4. Coaching recommendations for social media communication